



CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
Office of the City Manager
Letter to Commission No. 201-2004

To: Mayor David Dermer and
Members of the City Commission

Date: July 30, 2004

From: Jorge M. Gonzalez
City Manager

A handwritten signature of Jorge M. Gonzalez in black ink.

Subject: WEEKLY UPDATE

The purpose of this LTC is to provide you with an update describing some of the areas the Administration has recently been focusing on:

FY 2004/05 Budget – Staff and I continued to work on finalizing the proposed FY 2004 / 05 Budget that was presented to the City Commission on July 28, 2004. The first public hearing to consider the proposed millage rates and tentative budgets for FY 2004/05 will be on Thursday, September 9, 2004

Miami Dade County General Obligation Bond – Various meetings and discussion were held related to the Countywide General Obligation Bond being placed on the November ballot. An LTC outlining and providing additional information regarding the ballot questions as approved by the Board of County Commissioners at their meeting on July 20 was sent to the Mayor and Commission on July 27.

Fire Department – The Department's annual service awards ceremony was held on July 23 in the City Commission Chambers. This annual event recognizes all the rank promotions that have occurred throughout the past year as well as the presentation of several awards, including the Firefighter of the Year. An LTC with additional details about the event and the names of all the winners will be sent shortly.

Police Department – On July 20, a ceremony was held to initiate the Seniors VS Crime Store Front Office Project. The primary goal of this project is to reduce the victimization of senior citizens who are often targeted for specific crimes based on their age. This program will provide senior citizens a user friendly venue to report crimes and seek assistance when needed. There are 15 Store Front projects currently operating in the State of Florida including one to be housed in the Miami Beach Police Department. The Store Front in the Miami Beach Police Department is the first of its kind in Miami-Dade County and will be used as a prototype for other municipal police agencies. An LTC with additional information has already been sent. On July 30, the graduation of the second Junior Police

Academy was held. This three week program consisted of classes on physical activities and "hands on" police related scenarios. The curriculum and activities emphasize lessons in team building, ethics, leadership and critical thinking. Classroom lessons included Law, Patrol Procedures, Police Department Organization, Crime Scene Investigation, and Basic Report Writing. Presentations were also given by representatives of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms, Miami-Dade State Attorneys Office, and the Miami Beach Fire Department. In addition, the Police Chief and I met with Commissioner Smith on July 21 and Commissioner Gross on July 26 to discuss current strategies in policing.

Washington Avenue - A Community pre-construction kick-off meeting for the Washington Avenue Project took place on Thursday, July 29 at the Police Station's Community Room. Staff from CIP and representatives from Hazen & Sawyer presented the plans for the construction project. Commissioner Gross and approximately 60 members of the public attended the meeting and overall, the plans and information shared were very well received. The presentation that was made at this meeting will be available via the City's website very soon.

Organizational Development – I held an informal lunch on July 19 with all interns that have been working with the City throughout the summer. About 20 young adults enrolled in college have participated in the City's Summer Internship Program. On July 21, I attended a brown bag lunch with staff from the Police Department as part of my ongoing efforts to meet with staff from all levels throughout all City Departments. The second session of the "Supervision in Government" series took place on July 22. This course is specifically designed for new supervisors in the City. Follow up sessions of this training are scheduled for August 5 and August 19. An educational fair will be held at City Hall on August 12 to provide employees and members of the public an opportunity to learn about higher education alternatives available throughout South Florida. Representatives from Florida International University, Barry University, Miami Dade Community College, Nova Southeastern and several other area colleges will be here at City Hall to share information about educational opportunities at their respective schools.

New World Symphony (NWS) – on July 29, representatives from the NWS met with City staff and the owners of the 420 Lincoln Road Building and submitted an additional Project Concept Plan. The revised concept plans reflect maintaining Drexel Avenue open and providing an open plaza area between Drexel and Washington Avenue and providing main pedestrian linkages and connections between Convention Center Drive, 17th Street and Lincoln Road via Drexel Avenue; orienting the parking garage frontage onto on Pennsylvania Avenue; and the proposed main exterior screen has been shifted from the south side of the building to the east side facing towards the park. The revised concept Plan will be presented to the Planning Board on August 24, 2004 and to the City Commission on September 8, 2004.

Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB) – The GMCVB Board of Directors met on July 21 to discuss the updated tourism strategic plan. A follow up meeting was held on July 23 with representative from the GMCVB to discuss the City's contract and continue our negotiations.

Beach Renourishment – I met with County Manager George Burgess, County Staff, and Steven Muss on July 22 to continue discussing the ongoing issues related to the beach renourishment projects.

Grants Management – The City received a grant from the South Florida Water Management District in the amount of \$400,000 for stormwater improvements for City projects. A check was presented by a representative of the South Florida Water Management District at the July 28 City Commission meeting. In addition, the City received a grant in the amount of \$13,000 for the Byron Carlyle Theater from the Miami Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs. Funds will be used for equipment in the Theater.

Union Negotiations – No meetings with the Communications Workers of America (CWA) Union have taken place since our last meeting on July 7 due to the fact that their Union President has been on vacation since then. He is scheduled to return on August 9 and we are awaiting response from him in order to schedule our next meeting. A meeting to resume discussions and negotiations with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Union is scheduled to take place on August 6, 2004.

Parks & Recreation - The 61st annual Playground Revue took place on July 22 at the Jackie Gleason Theater of the Performing Arts. To better accommodate the standing-room-only crowds of recent shows, there were two shows held. The first performance took place at 1:00 p.m. and was for younger children. The second performance took place at 7:00 p.m. and was for older children. More than 3,500 parents, guests and campers attended the two shows, the highest attendance in the City's history of producing this event. The National City-County Communications & Marketing Association (3CMA) has selected our Recreation Review magazine as a finalist in its 2004 Savvy Awards competition. Judges chose our magazine as one of three finalists from among 691 entries in the Publications Category, Recreation Catalogs. 3CMA is the leading organization for local governments that are innovating new and better ways of communicating with their citizens.

Camp Miami Beach – HBO, the cable network, partnered with the City to present the City's first Camp Miami Beach, a series of arts and cultural programs, sports and recreation, and health and wellness activities aimed at highlighting the Miami Beach to visiting families and residents. A separate LTC, as well as a press release prepared by HBO announcing the partnership, has already been sent.

Vote Miami Beach – City staff continue to work on the Vote Miami Beach effort, the City's ongoing campaign to create and stimulate awareness among Miami Beach residents about voting. To give Miami Beach residents a greater voice in local and national elections, an incentive program has been established to encourage residents to become a registered voter and to vote. Staff met with representatives from Commissioner Steinberg's office on July 30 to discuss ongoing plans, including producing a segment on Channel 20 about this effort.

Elder Affairs - The City, along with the Department of Elder Affairs of Florida and the Alliance for Aging, is hosting workshops and a hearing to inform seniors about Medicare discount cards and to obtain input on the delivery of services to seniors. The workshops and the hearing are free and of interest to any senior citizen, person caring for an elder, or a family member of a senior on Medicare. The Medicare workshops will take place on August 2 with the English sessions at 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and the Spanish sessions at 11:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The hearing on elderly services will be held on August 4, 2004 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The hearing will be held in English, Spanish and Russian. The workshops and hearing will all be held in the City Commission Chambers.

Hispanic Heritage Month – Preparations are already under way for this year's Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations taking place from September 14 – October 15, 2004. The Hispanic Affairs Committee (HAC) is sponsoring a book collection of new and/or used books to promote literacy during Hispanic Heritage Month. Books will be collected through October 15, 2004 at the following Miami Beach locations: City Hall, 1700 Convention Center Drive.; Hispanic Community Center, 1701 Normandy Drive; Ayuda, 7118 Byron Avenue; and at Jacobo's Watch Repair, 302 Lincoln Road. The HAC also seeks nominations for the 2004 Hispanic Heritage Month Awards. These awards are merited for categories such as: public safety, business, education, and social services. In addition, plans are under way for our annual employee luncheon. More details will be provided as they become available.

Planned Progress – The CIP Office is coordinating an informational meeting on August 3 at 4:00 p.m. at the 10th Street Auditorium to share details with members of the public regarding the upcoming construction project taking place in Lummus Park on Ocean Drive from 5th to 14th Streets.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Electronic Copy: Management Team

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